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Finance Committee Minutes 10-16-2002

ARLINGTON FINANCE COMMITTEE
MINUTES OF MEETING
7:30 PM TOWN HALL HEARING ROOM
Oct. 16, 2002

ATTENDEES:

Janowitz*	Feinleib*		O'Neill*	Mahoney*
DeCoursey*	Connors	Simmons*	Morrisette*	
Tosti*	Foskett*	Deyst	Ronan*	
Piandes	Franclemont*		Olsen*	
DuBois*	Howard*	Fanning*	Tosi*	Kneeland

- Indicates present

VISITORS: Director of Human Services Patsy Kraemer, Town Manager Phil Farrington, Deputy Town Manager Nancy Galkowski, Town Counsel John Maher, Planning Department Director Alan McClennen, Selectman Kathleen Dias, Selectman Charlie Lyons, School Committee members Dave McKenna, chair; Barbara Goodman, School Superintendent Kay Donovan, School Business Manager David Kale, Town Meeting members Chick Abbott, Jackie Harrington, Rich Carreiro; Retirement Board Member Joe Rosselli, Paul Bayer.

SYMMEs: Charles Foskett presented an addendum to the report he gave at the last meeting. The annual operating cost has been reduced by McClennen from \$1.5 million to \$800,000. Refer to handout. The Town has borrowed \$9 million for this project so far.

TRANSFER: Franclemont reviewed her e-mail summary with her recommendation to allow the drug and alcohol program to complete as planned in December. Kraemer addressed questions raised at the last meeting. Several members suggested disapproving any transfer in order to set an example of what must be done in FY04 and to protect the Reserve Fund for likely future demands. Move to transfer \$11,382 from buyout fund failed, 5-10. Move to disapprove any transfer failed, 7-8. VOTED to transfer \$10,337 from buyout fund to Human Services to allow work to continue until Nov. 29. The vote was 11-4.

ARTICLE 3: HOME-RULE PETITION: Rosselli stated the reason for this petition is to ensure that several employees who retired early in 1993 would qualify for the retirement income floor established by Section 90c. If accepted by the Town in a given year (as was the case in 1993), retirees in that year are assured at least 50% of the current salary of the position from which they retired. In 1993 employees were allowed to add up to 3 years to their service for retirement eligibility. According to Lyons, and some of the people affected, they were promised that 90c would apply. According to Maher, the State now says 90c does not apply since the 3 years are creditable, not actual service. The Retirement Board has no formal position. The Board of Selectmen has voted to support the petition. VOTED to support the petition for the 4 or 5 specific retirees involved. The vote was 12-3.

ARTICLE 2 REDUCTION IN TOWN BUDGETS: Lyons, speaking for the Board of Selectmen recommended reducing the Comptroller's budget by \$30k. VOTED to support this reduction. Unanimous. Lyons to provide budget adjustment details.

Farrington recommended spreading cuts in his budgets across his departments according to a letter FinCom members received for a total of \$188,000. He said there would be no new demand on the overtime budgets. VOTED to support this recommendation with the \$30,000 early retirement savings split equally between Police and Fire. Unanimous.

Kale explained the superintendent's recommended cuts totaling \$158,947, using a handout. These savings will be realized by not filling positions and by using grant money for administrative costs where permitted. The School Committee has not acted on the recommendation and the topic is not scheduled for the next meeting. VOTED to support the superintendent's

recommendation.

FY04: There was a general discussion of projection. Members suggested more vigorous union negotiations, especially for health insurance. There is some interest in a December meeting to develop a consensus approach to FY04.

COMMITTEE BUSINESS:

RESERVE FUND BALANCE \$300,000

Peter B. Howard, secretary